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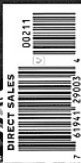
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SCOTT SNYDER RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
AND STEPHEN KING

VERTIGO

AMERICAN VAMPIRE

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Scott Snyder

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WRIGHTSON

July, 1925. Los Angeles.

WELL, A BRIGHT
AND SUNNY MORNING
TO EVERYONE LISTENING
OUT THERE ON THIS
GLORIOUS FOURTH
OF JULY...

YOU'RE
LISTENING TO KLAR,
BROADCASTING AT A
HAPPY, HEALTHY 500
WATTS...

NOK
NOK

MORNING,
IS PEARL
AROUND?

LET
ME GUESS
SYAWNE
HENRY. THIS
WAY.

...AND
BECAUSE WE
KNOW YOU'VE BEEN
WAITING ON THE
EDGE OF YOUR
SEAT ALL
NIGHT...

...HERE
IT IS,
WITHOUT
FURTHER
ADO...

PEARL, YOU
GOT COMPANY...
PEARL?

PEARL?

HER BED
ISN'T SLEPT
IN.

...OF
AMERICAN GRAIN'S
DRAMATIC PRODUCTION
OF WILLIAM BUNTING'S
CULT CLASSIC OF
TERROR AND WESTERN
ADVENTURE...

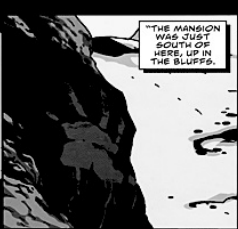
THIP
THIP

OKAY,
YOU BUM, I'M
OPENING THE
DOOR, SO
COVER UP.

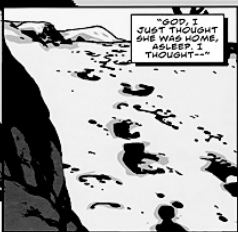
...WE BRING
YOU THE SECOND
INSTALLMENT...



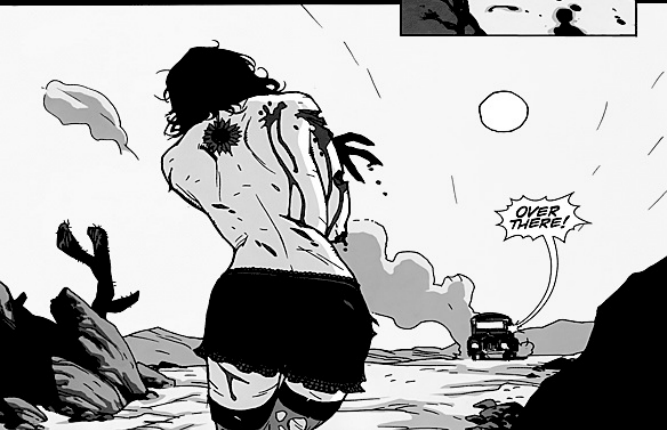
"...BAD
BLOOD."



"THE MANSION
WAS JUST
SOUTH OF
HERE, UP IN
THE BLUFFS."



"GOD, I
JUST THOUGHT
SHE WAS HOME,
ASLEEP. I
THOUGHT--"



OVER
THERE!

The main illustration depicts a character with a pale, zombie-like appearance standing in a desert landscape. The character has dark, messy hair, a wide-eyed, staring expression, and a large, bloody wound on their chest. They are wearing dark, torn clothing and dark leggings with circular patterns. The background shows a desert with rocky ground, a few small plants, and a large, gnarled tree trunk on the left. The title "MORNING STAR" is written in a large, stylized, outlined font on the left side of the character.

MORNING STAR

WRITER: SCOTT SNYDER
ARTIST: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

COLORS: DAVE PICCAG
LETTERS: STEVE WANDS
COVER: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
VARIANT COVER BY
BENJIE WRIGHTSON
EDITOR: MARK DOTY
AMERICAN VAMPIRE
CREATED BY SCOTT SNYDER

"I'M AFRAID HER CONDITION IS MORE THAN A MATTER OF BLOOD LOSS AT THIS POINT. THE DAMAGE TO HER BODY IS EXTENSIVE."

HOSPITAL

BUT YOU SAID THEY WERE JUST SKIN DEEP, THE ANIMAL BITES.

THE BITES THEMSELVES AREN'T THE PROBLEM.

IT'S THE INTERNAL DAMAGE, THE INJURY DONE TO HER ORGANS. THE BLOOD LOSS DEPRIVED HER BODY OF OXYGEN FOR TOO LONG, AND THIS DEPRIVATION CAUSED IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE TO HER KIDNEYS, HER HEART, AND HER BRAIN.

I'M SAYING HER BODY IS ALREADY SHUTTING DOWN.

YOU'RE SAYING THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO.

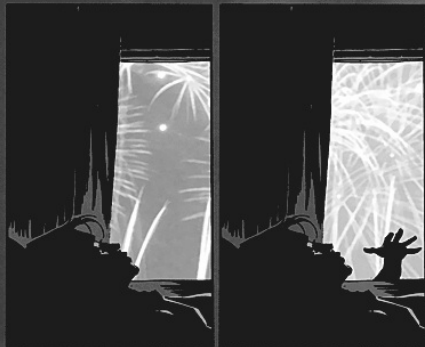
I'M SAYING... IF THERE'S ANYONE ELSE IMPORTANT TO HER LIVING NEARBY, GET THEM HERE SOON, BEFORE MORNING. I'M SORRY.

NO! HERE! TAKE MY BLOOD! PLEASE, JUST TRY!

HATTIE--

TAKE IT! TAKE MY BLOOD!

TAKE IT--



3 SIGHTS
AIN'T THAT A
SHAME.

OLD BLOCH'S
PARTY ACTUALLY
BORED YOU TO
DEATH.



STILL, I
CAN'T IN GOOD
CONSCIENCE LET
YOU MISS OUT ON
OUR COUNTRY'S
149th
BIRTHDAY.



IT'D BE
DOWNRIGHT
UNPATRIOTIC
OF ME.



"BE VERY
QUIET."

ONE THING'S
FOR CERTAIN.
THEY'RE NOT TAKING
ME BACK TO THAT
PRISON ALIVE...

WHAT
WAS THAT,
ANNIE?

DADDY?

DON'T MOVE A MUSCLE.
MAYBE THEY'LL PASS
RIGHT BY US.

DADDY, WHY ARE
YOU REAPING THIS
EARLY?

THERE
YOU ARE...

...I
WAS JUST
LOOKING
FOR YOU!

HSSSS!





HATE
TO SAY I
TOLD YOU
SO.

STAY
AWAY!

YOU'RE...
YOU'RE ONE,
TOO, AREN'T
YOU?

EASY
THERE, DOLLY.
I JUST CAME TO
SAY HELLO AND
GOODBYE.

WHAT... WHAT
HAPPENED
TO ME?

LET'S JUST SAY... AN EVIL OLD
QUEEN PUT YOU IN A DEEP SLEEP.
BUT THEN I CAME ALONG AND I
KISSED YOU, AND TURNED YOU
FROM A FROG INTO
A PRINCESS.

YOU'VE
GOT YOUR FAIRY
TALES MIXED UP,
ASSHOLE! NOW
WHAT HAPPENED
TO ME?!

WELL, THE
BAD NEWS
IS--YOU
DIED.

DIED...?





NO, THIS
CAN'T BE REAL. IT
CAN'T.



OH, IT'S
THE REAL
DEAL.



BUT THE SUN...
IF I WAS A VAMPIRE,
WOULDN'T IT--

AND THEREIN
LIES THE GOOD
NEWS.



WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?

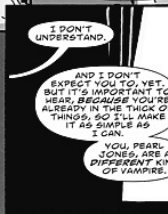


I'M TALKING
ABOUT EVOLUTION,
DOLLY.



EVOLUTION?

YEP,
EV-O-LUTION.
AND YOU, AND
MEY WE'RE
IT.



I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.

AND I DON'T
EXPECT YOU TO, YET.
BUT IT'S IMPORTANT TO
HEAR, BECAUSE YOU'RE
ALREADY IN THE THICK OF
THINGS, SO I'LL MAKE
IT AS SIMPLE AS
I CAN.

YOU, PEARL
JONES, ARE A
DIFFERENT KIND
OF VAMPIRE.





DIFFERENT KIND?
GOD, I'M SO THIRSTY--I
CAN FEEL IT IN MY MUSCLES,
DOWN IN THE FIBERS OR
SOMETHING.

HEY, HONEY,
STAY WITH ME,
OKAY?

WHAT
ARE YOU
TRYING
TO TELL
ME?



JUST PICTURE IT
IN AUTOMOTIVE
TERMS, BLOCH AND
HIS KIND, THEY'RE
LIKE... OLD, BROKEN-
DOWN EUROPEAN
CLUNKERS, OKAY?

BUT YOU AND ME, DOLLY?
WE'RE LIKE SHINY NEW
1926 FORDS. TOP OF THE
LINE, JUST ROLLED OUT
ONTO THE SHOWROOM
FLOOR.

SEE SOMETIMES,
WHEN THE BLOOD
HITS SOMEONE NEW,
FROM SOMEWHERE
NEW...

...IT
MAKES
SOMETHING
NEW.

WITH
A WHOLE
NEW BAG OF
TRICKS, GET
IT?

NEW
TRICKS
HOW?

WELL,
WE GOT
BETTER
TANGS FOR
ONE.

YOU'LL FIGURE IT OUT SOON ENOUGH.
WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO GET IS THAT
YOU, MY DEAR, ARE TELEPHONE TO
THEIR TELEGRAPH, RIFLE TO
THEIR MUSKET.



AND THEY HATE
YOU FOR IT, SO
YOU JUST GO ON
AND HATE THEM
RIGHT BACK.

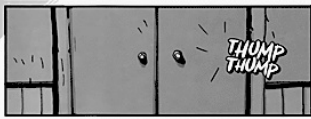
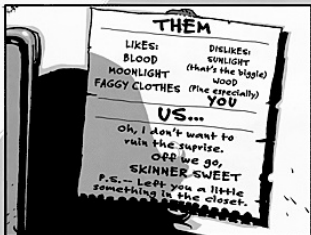
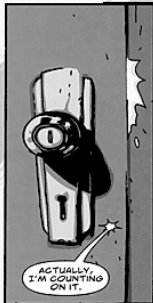
AND
NOW WE
REACH THE
GOODBYE
PART.

WHAT?!
YOU'RE
LEAVING?
NOW?



AFRAID SO.
THAT BUSINESS
DEAL I WAS WORKING
ON WITH OLD BLOCH?
SEEMS IT JUST
FELL THROUGH. ON
TO GREENER
PASTURES.

I'LL BE
SEEING YOU
AROUND, THOUGH.
BE SURE TO GIVE
OLD BLOCH
MY REGARDS
NOW.









HELP...
PLEASE...



WHAT DID
YOU DO TO
ME, YOU
BITCH!



SO... NUMB. CAN'T...
MOVE...

THERE'S
SOMETHING
SPECIAL
ABOUT YOU,
CHASE.

A
QUALITY...



I JUST
WANT TO
GOBBLE
YOU UP.

BUT FIRST
WE'RE GOING TO
HAVE A LITTLE
QUESTION AND
ANSWER...

MR. HAMILTON?

MR. HAMILTON,
ARE YOU IN
THERE?

HAMILTON

NOK
NOK

MR. HAMILTON, MR. OTIS TOLD ME
TO TELL YOU THAT, QUOTE, "EVERY
MINUTE YOU ARE LATE, THE MOVIE
LOSES ANOTHER NINE-HUNDRED AND
TWENTY-THREE DOLLARS AND
THIRTY-THREE CENTS."

OKAY, MR.
HAMILTON,
I'M COMING
IN...

AAAAA!!!

To be
Continued...

Los Angeles, 1925.



COME CELEBRATE THE RE-ISSUE OF
BAD BLOOD

WILL BENTING'S ONE-OF-A-KIND CLASSIC "DIME NOVEL" BASED ON THE LIFE & DEATH OF NOTORIOUS OUTLAW SKINNER SWEET COMBINES THE **WESTERN** THRILLS OF ZANE GREY AND THE **HORROR** THRILLS OF BRAM STOKER! MR. BENTING IN PERSON AT 4 PM JULY 11TH COME ONE COME ALL **ADMISSION FREE**



IT'S ALL ABOUT TIME. I KNOW IT, AND WHEN YOU GET TO BE MY AGE, YOU'LL KNOW IT, TOO. "TIME HEALS ALL WOUNDS," EVER HEAR THAT ONE?

BUT THERE'S ONE PLACE WHERE TIME STOPS, FOR BOTH THE SAINTS AND THE SINNERS.

DEEP WATER

WRITER: STEPHEN KING ARTIST: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

COLORS: DAVE MCCAIG LETTERS: STEVE WANDS
EDITOR: MARK DOYLE



"OR DOES
IT?"

SKINNER SWEET

1850 - 1880

OUTLAW KILLER
DEFILER OF WOMEN
BORN IN KANSAS
BURNS IN HELL



"AFTER THE FIGHT
WITH SKINNER SWEET,
JAMES BOCK LAPPED
INTO A COMA FOR
FOUR DAYS. AFTER
FELIX CAMILLO GOT
THE TELEGRAM, I
THINK PART OF HIM
MUST HAVE HOPED
BOCK WOULD NEVER
WAKE UP."



"BUT ON THE FIFTH
DAY, HE DID."

WHERE
AM I?

MRS. PRUITT'S
ROOMING HOUSE IN
SIDEWINDER.

YOU'RE GOING
TO BE ALL RIGHT, JIM.



SKINNER
SWEET--?

THAT
DOGT IN
BOOT
HILL.

I HAVE TO GET A
MESSAGE TO ELLA! HE
THREATENED HER, AND...
FELIX! WHAT'S WRONG?
WHY ARE YOU CRYING?



I'M SORRY,
PARD. I'M SO,
SO SORRY.
AT LEAST IT
WAS...



"...PAINLESS."



WE LIE TO PROTECT
THE ONES WE LOVE,
BUT THEY RARELY
BELIEVE; MORE
OFTEN THAN NOT,
THEY SEE THE TRUTH
IN OUR FACES.

I WISH YOU
WEREN'T DEAD, YOU
POISON SON OF A
BITCH. THEN I COULD
DIG YOU UP AND KILL
YOU AGAIN. THERE'S
ONE THING I CAN
DO...



SKIN
SWEAT

1850 - 1880

OUTLAW KILLER
DEFILER OF WOMEN
BORN IN KANSAS
BURIED IN HELL



"OUR PINKERTON FRIEND
SEEMS WELL ENOUGH
TO LEAVE TOWN..."

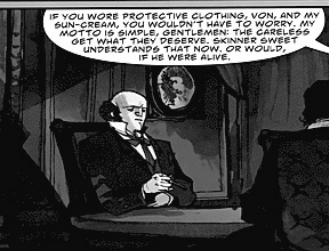


"THIS
DOES NOT
DISPLEASE
ME."

"GRASS
GOTT,
PERDY! THE
SUNI WATCH
WHAT YOU
DO!"



"IF YOU WORE PROTECTIVE CLOTHING, VON, AND MY
SUN-CREAM, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY. MY
MOTTO IS SIMPLE, GENTLEMEN: THE CARELESS
GET WHAT THEY DESERVE. SKINNER SWEET
UNDERSTANDS THAT NOW, OR WOULD,
IF HE WERE ALIVE."



"MAYBE HE STILL IS, YES?
OR DID THAT IDEA NEVER
CROSS YOUR MIND?"

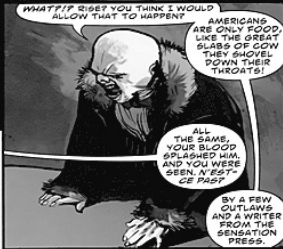


"ONLY A
RUSSIAN COULD
CONCEIVE SUCH A
RIDICULOUS IDEA."

"YOUR BLOOD TOUCHED HIM
AS HE LAY DYING. EN LE SANG
EST LA VIE--THE BLOOD IS
THE LIFE. C'EST VRAI? I'M
AFRAID HE MIGHT--"



"WHAT? IF RISE? YOU THINK I WOULD
ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN?"



"AMERICANS
ARE ONLY FOOD,
LIKE THE GREAT
SLABS OF COW
THEY SHOVEL
DOWN THEIR
THROATS!"

"ALL
THE SAME,
YOUR BLOOD
SPASHED HIM,
AND YOU WERE
SEEN. N'EST-
CE PAS?"

"BY A FEW
OUTLAWS
AND A WRITER
FROM THE
SENSATION
PRESS."

"SKINNER SWEET
IS DEAD AND THERE'S
MONEY TO BE MADE.
NOT IN THIS SHIT-
LITTERED TRAIL
STOP, EITHER."

"IT'S IN THE
RAILROAD AND THE LAND
SOUTH OF HERE, IN THE
NEW MEXICO TERRITORY--
THE LAND WE PICKED UP FOR
PENNIES AN ACRE. IT'LL BE
WORTH A FORTUNE ONCE
IT'S IRRIGATED..."



"...AND OUR DAM
IS BUILT!"

WHAT
THE
HELL?

LOOKS TO
ME LIKE THEY'RE
GETTING READY
TO BUILD A
DAM.

THAT'S CRAZY!
WHY'D ANYONE WANT
TO DAM UP THE
BAYA RIVER?

DON'T KNOW AND DON'T CARE.
BUT I CARE ABOUT YOUR FATHER,
FELIX. THE REST OF SKINNER'S
GANG WAS GOT TO BE AROUND
HERE SOMEPLACE. WILL HE
BE ALL RIGHT?

THANKS TO THE
FOOTHILLS SURROUNDING
IT, THIS SHITHOLE'S GOING
TO BE UNDER 60 FEET OF
WATER THREE YEARS
FROM NOW.

WHICH MEANS
SKINNER SWEET
WILL BE UNDER
66 FEET OF
WATER!

AND NO KLIPPELAK CAN RISE FROM WATER...
NO MORE THAN ONE CAN WALK IN THE SUN
WITHOUT ZASHITA--HOW DO YOU
SAY--PROTECTION.

MONSIEUR
PERCY, YOU ARE
A GENIUS.

I
KNOW.

SEÑOR
HECTOR
ALWAYS LANDS
ON HIS FEET.
SOMEDAY HE'S
GOING TO BE
MAYOR!

A MEX MAYOR
IN COLORADO?
NO OFFENSE,
FELIX, BUT
THAT'LL BE THE
DAY MEN FLY.

TWO DAYS LATER WE WERE IN THE NORTHEAST PART OF THE NEW MEXICO TERRITORY.

A LITTLE TOWN CALLED CRUCES...

"...WITH A GRAVEYARD A LOT NICER THAN SIDEWINDER'S BOOT HILL. BUT A GRAVEYARD IS STILL A GRAVEYARD."

ELLA LANGUM
LOVED DAUGHTER
MAY 10, 1855
JULY 10, 1880
DEARLY MISSED
ALL HIS AFFECTION

HE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT?

IS HE A MANT? SI.

COME ON, AMIGO. LET'S RIDE.

OKAY IF I TAG ALONG?

JUST KEEP UP.

WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

IT TURNED OUT TO BE ARIZONA THAT TIME...BUT THE PLACE WE WERE REALLY HEADED FOR WAS THE 20TH CENTURY. A MAN WITH A BROKEN HEART THINKS DISTANCE WILL CURE HIM, BUT HE'S WRONG.

TIME IS THE ONLY CONSTANT. FOR THE LIVING IT NEVER STOPS...

"...FOR THE DEAD IT
DOESN'T MATTER..."



"...AND FOR
THE UNDEAD?"



"FOR THE UNDEAD,
TIME IS A JOKE TO
BE LAUGHED AT!"



NOT
BAD, BUT...
I WISH... SOME
SWEET
STUFF...

"IT'S ALL ABOUT TIME; I ASSURE YOU OF THIS, AND BY LATE 1883, TIME IN SIDESWINDER HAD GROWN SHORT."





"BY 1885, I'D FORGOTTEN
ALL ABOUT THE TOWN OF
SIDEWINDER, RIDING WITH
JIM BOOK AND FELIX
CAMILLO KEPT ME OCCUPIED."



"I WAS WITH BOOK IN
FANNING, ARIZONA, WHEN HE
AND FELIX TOOK OUT BUTCH
YEAGER AND HIS GANG..."

"...AND WHEN THE NEVADA KID WAS
HUNG. HE WAS A KID...JUST 15. WHEN
HE DROPPED THROUGH THE TRAP, HE
WAS CRYING FOR HIS MOTHER."

DAMN
GOOD JOB,
BOOK.

THERE'S
NOTHING GOOD
ABOUT IT. I'VE
JUST ABOUT HAD
A BELLYFUL.







THAT BRINGS US
TO THE TOWN OF LAKEVIEW,
COLORADO, THE TOWN THAT
REPLACED SIDEWINDER. THE
YEAR IS 1909...

WESTERN HEMISPHERE BANK



I HAF NEVER SEEN
DIVING GEAR LIKE
THAT.

GODDAMN SCAVENGERS HEADED
UP TO WHERE SIDEWINDER USED
TO BE. IF WE'RE LUCKY, THEY'LL
DROWN LIKE POLEGATS IN A
PLUGGED-UP PRIVY.



WE'RE
RIGHT OVER
IT.

FIRE UP THAT
COMPRESSOR.



IF SWEET'S COFFIN AN'T FLOATING
FREE, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO DIG DOWN
TO IT--WHAT USED TO BE GROUND
IS ONLY SILT NOW.

ANYTHING
IN HIS POCKETS
WILL BE WORTH
MONEY. THAT
HAF OF HIS'D
BE GOOD.

FUT-FUT-FUT



BUT IN A PINCH, ANY SKULL WILL DO. AS LONG AS A
COLLECTOR THINKS IT'S SKINNER SWEET'S, WE'RE
A HUNDRED DOLLARS RICHER.

JUST
DON'T FOUL
THE FUCKING
HOSE!

FUT-FUT-FUT
FUT-FUT-FUT
FUT-FUT-FUT
FUT-FUT-FUT



"PERCY DIDN'T REALIZE THAT SKINNER SWEET WAS SOMETHING ENTIRELY NEW. WATER WOULDN'T HOLD HIM; SUNLIGHT WOULDN'T BURN HIM BUT STARVING IN THE DARK, HE WAS TOO WEAK TO ESCAPE."



HELLO,
MOTHERFUCKER!
GOT ANY
CANDY?



ON THE EDGE EDITORIAL BY PETER BAGGE



My soon-to-be-released graphic novel "Other Lives" came about several years

ago when I was pitching a few ideas to then-Vertigo editor Bob Schreck. One of them had to do with the dual identities that people can so easily assume these days, thanks mainly to the Internet, and I used the online virtual community Second Life as an example. Bob liked that idea in particular and asked me to flesh it out more – a request that put me in a bit of a bind, since I'd never been on Second Life. All I knew about it was a handful of sensationalist news stories about how SL was the latest Big Threat to America's Youth, as are all new technologies that old-timers like me know next to nothing about. Time to do some research! (Thankfully for cheapskates like myself, you can download SL for free.)

The saying "truth is stranger than fiction" couldn't possibly apply better to Second Life. Left to my own devices, I could never have imagined the avatars, structures, costumes and behaviors I came across in that place. It also made me aware of how complex the actual people behind such things must be, and how fractured their own lives must be. As a result, I felt comfortable in letting my imagination run wild while writing OL, figuring that I couldn't possibly think up anything that someone wasn't already doing, either in the real world or a virtual one. Even murder and mayhem (actual, not virtual) has resulted from this collision of the real and imaginary!

Confusing and conflating fantasy with reality is nothing new, of course. Paranoids and schizophrenics have been doing it forever, as has anyone whose life is so awful or so mundane – or whose self-esteem is so low, or simply has something to hide – that they'll lose themselves in fantasy worlds simply to survive, or at least to get through the day, and I incorporated these age-old factors into the story as well. In fact, computer-generated second identities are a mere extension and expansion of these ancient needs and desires. Technology just makes the unreal seem that much more realistic.

Paranoically yours,
Peter Bagge

HOT LIST

FABLES 94

A new storyline starts here!

Rose Red has finally hit rock bottom. Does she stay there or start the long, tortuous climb back up?

By Willingham, Buckingham and Leialoha.

PLUS! A preview of the upcoming Vertigo monthly "ZOMBIE!"



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AREA TEN

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SANDMAN: PRELUDES AND NOCTURNES

The first volume collecting Neil Gaiman's seminal horror series is available in a new edition featuring the improved production values and coloring from the Absolute Edition.



04.10
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OTHER LIVES-Original Graphic Novel

"A compelling (and very funny) examination of the creepy duality of modern existence by a comic-book (sorry, graphic novel) master of the height of his powers."

—Dan Clowes,
Ghost World



IN STORES 04.14.10

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